

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2017
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, April 11, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Ralph Atkinson, Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Joseph Frazier, Odessa Gregg, and Emerson Hunt were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Lakesha Shannon, City Attorney Chris Elliott, and Chief Dwayne Tennie.

Mayor Bobby Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Odessa Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press (Hometown TV 8).

Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on March 14, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

City Treasurer Patricia Brown was named *March Employee of the Month* and received a gift certificate. Mayor Davis stated that Mrs. Brown has worked hard to keep things straight in the City of Marion.

The Mayor's Monthly Beautification award was presented to Mr. Junior Francis. Mayor Davis stated that Mr. Francis is a very hardworking person in the community and he assists with the food distribution. He thanked Mr. Francis for all he does to help keep the city beautiful.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Ammons stated that a few weeks ago he and Councilman Michael Baker looked at a property on Marshall Street that is owned by the city. He asked that Council discuss the information and map of the property that is included in the Council packets, and provide some guidance on what they wish to do with the property. Mr. Ammons added that the property on the other side of Marshall Street facing Bluff Street will be developed for new housing starting within

the next 30 days. He stated that the portion owned by the City is zoned for industrial and was previously a railroad.

Councilman Baker stated that some of the residents across from the old railroad area has asked if the City would consider selling them some of the property. He stated that the City has owned this property since the railroad vacated, and it is real estate that could generate revenue for the City. He said the portion of property across the street from this area was given to the residents that live behind it. Mr. Ammons stated that the old lumber yard portion of the property across the street is being developed for single-family housing and duplexes. He added that the City has a few options which include changing the zoning from industrial to residential and creating 120 feet individual lots.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson requested that this item be taken under advisement to allow all council members the opportunity to go out and view the property. Mayor Davis stated that Council will take this item under advisement and take no action at this time.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

City Attorney Chris Elliott had no update at this time.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Davis stated that Departmental Reports are included in the Council packets.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Councilman Emerson Hunt commented that it has been a pleasure serving on City Council for the past 4 years. He thanked the citizens of District #3 that voted for him and stated that he would be honored to continue serving.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg thanked council and the citizens of Marion. She stated that this would be her last night as a member of City Council. She chose not to run for re-election because she plans to focus on the prison ministry she has been doing for the past 24 years.

Councilwoman Gregg added that she received national certification and would like to spend more time getting help for the young men and their families.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson stated that he enjoyed working with Councilwoman Gregg and Councilman Hunt over the past 4 years.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson expressed his concerns regarding the Marion County E-911 dispatch. He stated that he received a call from a citizen who stated they were placed on hold when they called 911 to report a break-in at their residence. He asked that this issue be addressed with the County or whoever is responsible for 911. Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson stated that he has seen about 20 TV's on the side of the road around town. He stated that he knows the City does not pick up TV's, but something needs to be done because they can't continue to sit there. He asked that Mr. Ammons address this issue. Mayor Davis asked Chief Dwayne Tennie if he has any recommendations on how the city can address the 911 issue with the County. Chief Tennie stated that he spoke with County Administrator Tim Harper about 2-3 months ago and he advised them that he would look into the issue. Chief Tennie added that the 911 issue has also been discussed numerous times in the Neighborhood Watch Committee meetings. Mrs. Dolly Watts of the Neighborhood Watch Committee was present and commented that the E-911 Director has been invited to their next meeting to discuss this issue.

Councilman Joseph Frazier thanked Councilwoman Gregg and Councilman Hunt for their service on City Council for the past 4 years. He commented on information received in the packet regarding the sidewalk repairs on Jones Avenue and asked when the repairs would be done. Mr. Ammons commented that the state has a contract for this project and the work should begin in the next 60-90 days.

Councilman Michael Baker also shared his concerns regarding the E-911 dispatch. He commented that his neighbor's house caught on fire a few weeks ago and two other neighbors called 911 and were hung up on. He stated that he then called 911 and was hung up on also. His sister then called and was able to speak with someone to report the details of the fire, but she

was hung up on too. Councilman Baker stated that the response time for the fireman to arrive was 15 minutes after the calls were made. He stated that answers are needed because it does appear that something is going on with E-911. He also added that the resident was killed in the fire. Councilman Baker stated that he addressed his concerns with the Police Chief, Fire Chief and the Coroner the day of the fire and was advised that he needs to speak with Mr. Harper. He stated that more needs to be done about this issue.

Councilman Joseph Frazier commented on a letter Council received from PDRTA. He said it was stated in a recent County Council meeting that PDRTA received funding from the City of Marion and the Healthcare Foundation but not from the City of Mullins which could cut their services. He recommended that PDRTA Director Chuck McNeal come and address Council regarding the funding.

Mayor Davis commented that the City has contributed to PDRTA over the past years, and they are asking that the funding be added to the budget each year to continue services for the citizens of Marion. He stated that it costs PDRTA \$251,000 per year to operate the bus that transports citizens to work in Myrtle Beach. Mayor Davis stated that he provided a copy of the funding request letter from PDRTA to City Treasurer Patricia Brown so that it could be considered in this year's budget. He commented that services would be discontinued in the City of Marion if funding is no longer provided.

Mayor Davis commented that it has been a pleasure serving as Mayor for the past 4 years. He stated that it has been very busy and he enjoyed meeting all the citizens. He added that there are some things that you can and cannot get accomplished in 4 years, and there are still many things that need to be done including road repairs. He said that over 90% of the roads in the City of Marion do not belong to the city. He stated that no funding is received to repair those roads other than a portion of the County Transportation Committee (CTC) funds. He stated that the City has asked for some additional funding to pave roads and hopefully some of the funds will be received in the near future. Mayor Davis stated that a lot has been accomplished and a lot still needs to be done in the City of Marion. He thanked the citizens for their patience and for working

with Council to let them know when things are not right. He added that Council has tried their best to correct those things.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to enter executive session to receive a legal update from the City Attorney. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried. Upon returning from executive session, Mayor Davis stated that no action was taken. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to return to regular session, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Councilman Joseph Frazier commented that the City Attorneys have been very gracious over the years and made a motion that the City continue their services for three years after today. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker. Councilman Emerson Hunt requested that this item be tabled as Council has no knowledge of this request. Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked when was this matter discussed with the attorneys. He further questioned if they agreed to this request and at what salary. Councilman Emerson Hunt again asked that this discussion be tabled as Council has not been prepared. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson and Councilman Ralph Atkinson both agreed. Mayor Bobby Davis asked that Council vote on the said motion. Council members Michael Baker, Joseph Frazier, Odessa Gregg and Mayor Bobby Davis all voted yes. Council members Emerson Hunt, Ralph Atkinson and Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson voted no.; motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ronald Atkinson
Mayor Bobby L. Davis (Presided)

City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon
Recorded by Hometown TV 8:
April 11, 2017